DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 968 IR 055 331

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TITLE Intergenerational Programming in Public Libraries in Western Pennsylvania.
PUB DATE 15 Nov 94
NOTE 43p.; Master's Research Paper, Kent State University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Age Differences; *Age Groups; Attitude Change; Children; Community Programs; Financial Support; Generation Gap; *Intergenerational Programs; Library Facilities; *Library Services; Needs Assessment; *Older Adults; Program Development; *Public Libraries; Questionnaires
IDENTIFIERS *Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

The public library is a natural arena for intergenerational programs that can change "agist" attitudes by bringing older adults and youth together. This study determined the degree to which public libraries in western Pennsylvania perceive a need for programming for intergenerational programming, to what extent programs have been developed, and the success of the programs. Questionnaires were sent to 212 public libraries, and 121 (57%) were returned. It was found that while a majority of libraries perceived a need for intergenerational programming, few had actually done any. Only 53 (44%) libraries listed programs for older adults. While 82 (68%) libraries acknowledged the need for intergenerational programs, only 6 had presented them. Reasons included lack of staff, funds, and space. Five tables present study findings. Three appendixes contain a list of intergenerational programs presented in western Pennsylvania, the cover letter, and the survey questionnaire. (Contains 21 references.) (Author/SLD)

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INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Jeanne A. Sapir
November 15, 1994

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ABSTRACT

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMMING IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Contact between generations, in particular between older adults and youth, does not often take place as families have become more mobile and more nuclear. This lack of interaction frequently gives rise to "ageism," the discrimination based on stereotypical views of the elderly. Research in the fields of social gerontology and education has shown that programs that bring older adults and youth together bring about changes in these attitudes. The public library is a natural arena for intergenerational programming. This study attempted to determine the degree to which public libraries in western Pennsylvania perceive a need for programming for older adults and for intergenerational programming. It also attempted to determine the extent of intergenerational programming in those libraries. It was found that while a majority of libraries perceived a need for intergenerational programming, few had actually done any. The reasons include lack of staff, funds, and space.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES iii

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION 1

Purpose of Study 5

Limitations of Study 5

Definitions 6

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 7

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY 14

CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS OF DATA 16

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 26

Appendix A INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA ... 30

Appendix B COVER LETTER 32

Appendix C QUESTIONNAIRE 33

REFERENCE LIST 36

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Types of Programs Offered by Public Libraries for Older Adults	17
2.	Types of Special Services Offered for Older Adults	19
3.	Types of Areas Self-Reported by Responding Libraries	19
4.	Analysis of the Relationship Between Perception of Need for Intergenerational Programs and Plans to Develop Them	21
5.	Perceived Need for Services and Programs for Older Adults in the Responding Libraries' Service Areas	21

CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION

"Over the river and through the woods, to grandfather's house we go:" (Child, 273). Today it is frequently on an airplane, through the skies to Florida (or elsewhere) to visit Grandmother and Grandfather. It is a fact that intergenerational contact between the elderly and youth is not taken for granted. According to Rhea Joyce Rubin, seventy percent of older adults live at least two hours from their grandchildren and only about five percent of youth see their grandparents on a regular basis (Rubin 1993, 4). Children and older people have little opportunity to associate and to foster meaningful relationships.

The implication of this separation is that stereotypes develop. Children and adolescents frequently have negative attitudes toward the elderly and misconceptions of their attributes. At the same time, the elderly are frequently puzzled by youth and may view them in an unfavorable way (Seefeldt et al. 1982, 494). Instead of developing relationships that are mutually satisfying and beneficial, both groups become isolated from each other. The term "ageism" has been coined to describe the stereotyping of the

elderly or prejudice against them. As in prejudices of other kinds, ageism is rooted in fear, the fear of growing old, and involves suppositions of capabilities and preferences of older adults (Turock 1982, 111).

This problem has received the attention of psychologists, sociologists, gerontologists, educators, and librarians in recent years. The aging process and its problems, as well as its characteristics, have given rise to a body of knowledge that continues to grow. This knowledge has been integrated into the study of child development, family dynamics and society's institutions. Librarianship has also begun to recognize the needs of the elderly, developing research, policies, services, and programs to address those needs. It has begun to assess its attitudes and responsibilities to provide services specifically for the aging population.

In the field of education, the concept of contact between the generations, intergenerational contact, is gaining momentum as an area of concern. Research has been conducted examining the attitudes of the elderly and children toward each other and the effect intergenerational programs have on those attitudes. Public libraries are also beginning to take notice and to develop policies and programs of their own. Intergenerational programs are a way to bring together people of more than one age group, usually youth and older adults in mutually beneficial and enjoyable activities. In addition to bridging the "generation gap,"

library services can also benefit. Segregation among the users can be reduced, interdependence promoted,and more effective use of limited resources can be made (Rubin 1992, 3).

Public libraries are beginning to understand the value and benefits to be derived from intergenerational programming. Many libraries tend to maintain the age segregation that is found in schools and society at large. The adult and youth services are often kept totally separate. Intergenerational programming requires cooperation, and thus can stimulate a sense of *esprit de corps* among the staff. New alliances with community agencies can result, increasing the ability to serve the greater community and acquire new colleagues and supporters. Media attention can also result (Rubin 1993, 12). In addition, a new source of volunteers just may be produced.

The types of intergenerational programs in public libraries are widely varied, in addition to being innovative and creative. Some are one-time only programs; others are ongoing. Some are highly structured; others more informal. Some involve one-on-one contact; others involve groups. The literature has yielded many interesting examples.

One type of program incorporates the reading and sharing of books. Los Angeles Public Library has a Grandparents and Books project (Strickland 1990, 46). Volunteer grandparents are available at the library to read to children and to share reading activities such as puppet

shows. The children are not scheduled in groups; the volunteers read with as many as show up.

Other programs match children with volunteers for reading and/or tutoring (Rubin 1993, 73; Metcalf 1992, 2). Volunteers read to and with children on a regular basis, to promote love of reading to establish a relationship with someone of another generation.

The sharing of life stories, oral histories, and family histories provides other opportunities for intergenerational programming. In one program, children in grades four through eight were invited to come to the library with a grandparent. Each told a family story which was made into a book to keep and to share (Dobrez 1987, 408). Other story sharing programs have involved crafts, quilting, programs with a holiday theme -- all shared with grandparents (Rubin 1993).

Not all programs bring grandparents and grandchildren to the library. Often the issue of latchkey children provides the chance to incorporate older volunteers with the after school crowd. Help with homework, being a friend, and tutoring are some of the activities. In addition, the regular staff may experience a sense of relief (Baykin and Collins 1985, 31-33; Rizzo 1991, 904).

In many of the programs volunteers are recruited. The volunteers are recruited from among the senior citizens who are patrons of the library, by publicity to solicit volunteers, and from senior citizen groups and centers.

Government programs such as the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) are also sources of both volunteers and funding.

Purpose of the Study

This study assessed the extent to which public libraries in western Pennsylvania have perceived the need for intergenerational programming, to what extent programs have been developed, and the success of the programs.

Given the increasing awareness of the needs of the elderly and the deleterious effects of age separation and ageism in our society, the purpose of this study was to determine the amount of intergenerational programming in public libraries in western Pennsylvania. This is an area rich in public library history and tradition. Are libraries there continuing this leadership by engaging in intergenerational programming? What are some of the successes and problems encountered by individual libraries? The study asked for specific examples of programs and their evaluations.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to public libraries in western Pennsylvania and therefore is not generalizable to all public libraries.

Definition of Terms

Intergenerational programming: Activities or programs that involve the cooperation, interaction, or exchange between any two generations in order to provide sharing of ideas or experiences.

Elderly: Also referred to as senior citizens, aging, old people, older adults. Any person over the age of 65, retired or employed at any level.

CHAPTER II.
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The interest in library programs that bring together various age groups cannot be considered apart from examination of interest in providing library services to older adults. The field of social gerontology, the study of biological and behavioral aspects of aging in their political, social, and economic contexts, has grown at an ever increasing rate in the last half of this century. As the body of knowledge has increased, so have legislative mandates to protect and serve older adults (Turock 1982, 4). The Social Security Act of 1935, the Older Americans Act of 1965, the establishment of the Administration on Aging, and the recent Americans With Disabilities Act are just some of the basic mandates to provide economic support, research, and prevention of discrimination.

The interest in the processes and the needs of aging adults is of more than academic concern. The fastest growing segment of the population of the United States today is over age 65. One in every eight people is in this category. It is projected that by the year 2020, 20%, or one in every five, will be age 65 or older. The average life span has also been increasing since the 1950s. The

over 85 age group is growing the most rapidly, with about 1.2% in that range now (Rubin 1993, 4).

The term, "graying of America" refers to this phenomenon. The median age in the United States declined after a peak of 30 in 1950 for two decades. In 1970 it was 28 and has climbed to 33, with projections of 36 in the year 2000, 39 in 2010, and leveling off at 42 in the middle of the twenty-first century (Gerber et al. 1989, 3). The baby boomers are getting older.

However, their parents are themselves changing the way Americans age, living longer, with more health and affluence. The definitions of "old age," with their concomitant expectations, are undergoing revision. The traditional definition of old age is 65. This is now frequently modified to distinguish between the young-old (age 50-65), middle-old (66-75), and the old-old (75 and older) (Rubin and McGovern 1990, I-4). Torres-Gil defines the young-old as age 65-85 and the old-old as over the age 85. Middle age used to commence at age 30, but now can begin at age 50 (Torres-Gil 1992, 10).

In addition to the increased life span, the quality and character of the later years of life are undergoing changes. Several authors refer to the increasing educational level, affluence, and physical vigor of the elderly. They also point out that the aging are a diverse population, about whom it is difficult to make generalizations. While some are well off, many are poor, dependent on family or

government benefits. In addition to the changing definitions there is a change in attitude toward the elderly. Urbanization, and the scattering of families, the social and upward mobility of the young people have also contributed to the decline of the traditional status of the elderly (Torres-Gil 1992, 10).

As information on the aging proliferated, the library profession began to design services to meet the information needs of the elderly. The Cleveland Public Library was one of the first in the nation to provide direct service with the establishment of the Adult Education Department and the "Live Long and Like It Library Club." The club was a study and discussion group for people over age 60 and was tremendously successful (Turock 1982, 6).

Between 1957 and 1961, intense interest in serving the elderly increased. The American Library Association appointed the Committee on Library Service to the Aging within the Adult Services Division. The committee undertook a survey of library services to the elderly in 1957. It found that most libraries provided some services, primarily providing books, publicizing materials for the elderly, providing services to shut-ins, and working with other agencies (Turock 1982, 7).

Various pieces of legislation were enacted that were of crucial importance to increasing library services to the elderly. The Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) provided money to alter the physical structure of library

buildings to accommodate the needs of the elderly and physically handicapped. The LSCA also was responsible for increasing funds for large print materials (Turock 1982, 7).

The Older Americans Act, Title III provided funds to increase library service to homebound and institutionalized elders. In 1965 the Higher Education Act, Title II-B, provided funding for workshops, institutes, and research programs designed to promote leadership and training in the field.

In 1971 the landmark study by Booz, Allen and Hamilton for the Cleveland Public Library was conducted to assess the scope of public library services to persons over the age 65. The conclusions state that public library service to the aging was minimal and given a low priority, less than 1% of the budgets were for services to the elderly, and that services to the elderly were considered a part of adult services (Casey 1984, 44).

In 1981 a survey of Illinois public library services for the elderly was done. While there were differences in the samples and the questions, comparisons between the two studies have been made. It was concluded that in the intervening decade, progress had been made in offering services. Specifically, extension services to the homebound, educational programs, information and referral services, provision of talking books, and special programming for the well were emphasized. In addition, large and medium sized libraries in urban and suburban

communities were likely to develop relationships with other organizations serving the aging in those communities (Casey 1984, 52-53).

Studies of libraries and programs in the eighties appear to arrive at the conclusions that services to the aging are an important part of public library service. Libraries began to recognize that those over age 65 constituted a new breed of older adults. They were healthier, better educated, and more self-sufficient. Libraries began to think not only of providing direct services, but also becoming links with other agencies and organizations that offer formal and informal educational opportunities (Casey 1984, 64).

Betty Turock conducted an update of the 1971 *National Survey of Public Library Services for Older Adults*, completed in two phases in 1984 and 1987, in an attempt to assess the status of such library services. She found that the number of adults served was not much greater and that extension services still served the greatest number. In terms of priority, services to the elderly were only somewhat higher than previously and that funding still constituted little more that 1 percent of total library budgets (Turock 1988, 9-10). Surprisingly, and disturbingly, Turock discovered that public librarians believed that intellectual abilities of elders decline with age and, therefore, that informational and educational services were not the most appropriate to offer. This lack

of attention to the advances in the knowledge of aging causes stereotypes and ageism to persist (Turock 1988, 10).

Educators and social gerontologists have studied the attitudes and knowledge of students toward the elderly and the effect that intergenerational curricula and programs have on those attitudes. Assessments of children's attitudes generally report negative attitudes toward the elderly. Often the children reported not knowing an elderly person outside of their family, and spending little time with them. Activities were generally passive, such as watching television and playing board games (Page et al. 1981, 45). Adolescents are frequently isolated from people over 65 and therefore likely to have stereotypical views of them. This has implication for the future as the adolescents are a smaller population that may have the future responsibility of supporting the health and social service needs of a larger population of the elderly (Steitz and Verner 1987, 366).

Studies have shown that intergenerational curricula and programs do have a positive effect on the perceptions of the youth (Seefeldt et al. 1981, 85; Chapman and Neal 1990, 831). Continuous and consistent opportunities for intergenerational contact are key in directly combating negative attitudes and ageism, in both formal and informal situations (Peacock and Talley 1984, 18). Children seem to develop more positive attitudes toward the elderly with increased contact with them (Aday, Sims, Evans 1991, 381).

Contact between the generations gives both the young and the old a sense of being a part of an ongoing society (Peacock and Talley 1984, 17). Youth need to see the life cycle in its entirety in order to understand their place in it now and in the future. Often a relationship with an older adult can be one of acceptance and validation difficult to find elsewhere. One of the developmental tasks of older adulthood is to reminisce, to engage in the "life review process," evaluating and coming to terms with the personal past (Rubin 1993, 10; Manheimer 1984, 2). This process can be facilitated in a relationship with a younger person.

CHAPTER III.
METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire and cover letter (see Appendix B) was sent to 212 public libraries in western Pennsylvania to determine the interest in intergenerational programming, how many libraries have conducted programs, evaluations of those programs, and details concerning any programs done. The libraries were limited to public libraries and identified in 46th edition of the American Library Directory and only those libraries with ZIP codes that began with 15 or 16 were selected. The questionnaire was constructed adapting two models: "Intergenerational Library Programs Survey" (Rubin 1993) and "Serving Older Adults in North Carolina: A Survey" (Thompson 1988). Information collected is related to location in a rural, urban or suburban area; extent of services to senior citizens; and perception of need for intergenerational programming. Results were analyzed to determine the level of perceived need and extent of intergenerational programming.

The questionnaire was designed to elicit information concerning services and programs specifically for older adults or senior citizens. The libraries were asked to indicate whether or not they offer such services and/or

programs. If they do, they were asked to check the items that they offer. The libraries were also asked to indicate whether or not they feel there is a need for such services and programs in their service area. Specifically, they were asked if they perceive a need for intergenerational programming and whether or not they plan to present such programs in the future.

The data was analyzed to determine frequencies and percentages for each program or service. Frequencies and percentages were also analyzed for the perceived need for senior citizen and intergenerational programming, as well as for the type of area. Four chi-square analyses were done to determine if there is any relation between: (a) the type of area in which the libraries are located and the incidence of intergenerational programming, (b) area and perceived need for intergenerational programming,(c) perceived need for intergenerational programming and plans to conduct such a program, (d) perceived need for and incidence of intergenerational programming. This was to test the hypotheses that the type of area of a library has an influence on not only the perceived need for but also on the actual occurrence of these programs. In addition, it was hypothesized that the perceived need for these programs affects the actual occurrence.

CHAPTER IV.
ANALYSIS OF DATA

Of the 212 questionnaires that were mailed to public libraries in western Pennsylvania, 121 (57%) were returned. Of these respondents, 53 (44%) indicated that they do offer programs specifically for senior citizens, either on a regular basis or occasionally (Table 1). Table 1 represents the types of programs presented by the libraries that indicated that they offer programs for senior citizens. Two sets of percentages are displayed. The column labeled "n=121" represents percentages based on the total number of respondents to the questionnaire. The column labeled "n=53" represents the percentages based on the number of respondents offering programs for older adults. The most frequently offered programs are current events type programs (22 or 18%). This is followed by craft programs (20 or 16.5%) Booktalks, travelogues, and use of Bi-Folkal kits were each checked 18 times (15% each). The total number of programs offered by the 53 libraries is 141. Booktalks, current events, travelogues, craft programs and use of Bi-Folkal kits account for 96 (68%) of the programs offered. In addition, 11 libraries (21%) offer oral history programs.

Table 1.

Types of Programs Offered by Public Libraries for Older Adults

Program	f	%(n=121)	%(n=53
Libraries Offering Programs	53	44	
Current Events Programs	22	18	42
Craft Programs	20	16.5	38
Bi-Folkal Kits	18	15	34
Booktalks	18	15	34
Travelogues	18	15	34
Oral History	11	9	21
Music Programs	7	6	12
Storytelling	7	6	13
Intergenerational Programs	6	5	11
How to Use the Library	5	4	9
Poetry/Creative Writing	4	3	8
Drama	1	1	2

Of interest to this study is the incidence of intergenerational programing. Of the 53 libraries offering older adult programing, 6 (11%) have done at least one intergenerational program. This represented a scant 5% of the total respondents.

In addition, the libraries surveyed were asked to indicate which services they offer are of special benefit to older adults (Table 2). (Table 1 represents programs that are separately planned, not a part of the regular services offered by the libraries). By far, the most frequently provided service is large print items, 113 (93%). If a library offers only one service to older adults it is, with few exceptions, large print items. Talking books (recorded books or books on tape) is second with 87 instances (72%).

A perusal of the ALA Directory listings for public libraries in western Pennsylvania seemed to indicate that a large proportion were located in rural areas or small towns. This was confirmed by the libraries themselves in their responses to question 7, which asked the type of area in which they are located. Sixty-four (53%) reported rural locations, 35 (29%) suburban locations, and 22 (18%) urban locations (Table 3). It was hypothesized that the type of area had a relationship on the perceived need for senior citizen and/or intergenerational programing. Urban areas, with greater concentration of population and greater access to funding, are considered to be more likely to present or to perceive the need for intergenerational programming.

Table 2.
Types of Special Services Offered for Older Adults

Service	f	%
Large Print Items	113	93
Talking Books	87	72
Home Delivery service	37	31
Library Sponsored Visits	27	22
Bookmobile Service	15	12
Telecommunication Devices	12	10

Table 3.
Type of Area Self Reported by Responding Libraries

Area	f	%
Urban	22	18
Suburban	35	29
Rural	64	53
Total	121	100

Chi-square analysis was conducted to test the relationship between four sets of variables: (a) the perceived need for intergenerational programming and actual presentation of such programs, (b) perceived need and type of area, (c) the actual presentation of intergenerational programs and the type of area, and (d) the perceived need for intergenerational programming and plans for future intergenerational programs. For (a) above, a chi-square value of 2.15 (p=.28) indicated that these two variables are independent and not related. For the relationship between perceived need and type of area (b) a chi-square value of 8.46 (p=.07) indicated the variables are independent and not related. Likewise, the type of area and actual presentation of intergenerational programs (c) yielded a chi-square value of 2.38 (p=.3)

A chi-square analysis was also conducted to determine if there was a relationship between the perceived need for intergenerational programming and plans to conduct such a program in the future. A chi-square value of 26.8 (p=.00) indicated that these two variables are related (Table 4). Those libraries that plan to present at least one intergenerational program feel that there is a need for such programming.

A majority of the libraries indicated that there is indeed a need for both older adult and intergenerational programming (Table 5). Of the libraries that indicated a need for intergenerational programming, 72% are in urban

Table 4.
Analysis of the Relationship Between Perception of Need for Intergenerational Programs and Plans to Develop Them.

Need for Program	Plan for Program							
	No		Yes		Maybe		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
No	31	91.2	2	5.9	1	2.9	34	28.1
Yes	36	43.9	41	50	5	6.1	82	67.8
Maybe	4	80	0	0	1	0.8	5	4.1
Total	71	58.7	43	35.5	7	5.8	121	100.0

Chi-square value = 26.8
p= .00
Sample size = 121
Degrees of freedom = 4

Table 5.
Perceived Need for Services and Programs for Older Adults in the Responding Library's Service Area

Need	Yes		No		Maybe	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Need for Intergenerational Programs:	82	68	34	28	5	4
Plan to Do Intergenerational Program:	43	35.5	71	58.7	7	5.8
Need for Programming for Older Adults	75	62	42	35	4	3

areas and 73% are in rural areas. The hypothesis that urban libraries would be more likely to perceive a need for intergenerational programming was not confirmed by the data.

The hypothesis that urban libraries would also be more likely to conduct intergenerational programming also was not confirmed by chi-square analysis. Thus, according to these two analyses, the type of area in which a library is located has little relationship to the perceived need for and the occurrence of intergenerational programming.

Intergenerational programming cannot be considered separately from service to older adults. As the results of the survey, public libraries in western Pennsylvania are aware of the older adults in their service areas and their needs for programs and services. Over one half (62%) of the responding libraries indicated a need for programming for the older adults and two-thirds (68%) indicated a need for intergenerational programs. This awareness is evident in all three types of area (urban, suburban, rural). The chi-square analyses show there is little or no relationship between the type of area and the perceived need for intergenerational programming. Libraries in urban and rural areas alike are concerned about their older patrons and how best to serve them.

However, this awareness does not translate into corresponding presentations of programs. Only 6 (5%) of the 121 responding libraries actually had done

intergenerational programs. (These 6 libraries represented 11% of the 53 who do offer programs for senior citizens).

Most revealing were the comments volunteered by some of the respondents. While these comments cannot be construed as representative of all the respondents, they did fall into noteworthy patterns. The most frequent comment indicates that while there is a need for either type of programming, the library is constrained by limited staff and/or limited funds. This comment would sometimes be accompanied by the observation that the library is small, the librarian is the only fulltime and/or professional staff person, and that volunteers are relied on heavily.

Other comments of interest noted that specific programming for older adults was not developed due to the existence of nearby senior citizen centers. This situation seemed to preclude the necessity of planning specific programs for older adults. Also, several libraries indicated they do not produce older adult programs separately from their regular adult programs, noting that the majority of the participants are indeed older adults, constituting the bulk of the attendees. Others noted that their programs attracted a range of ages. These observations seemed to be evidence of the perceived lack of need for specific programs for senior citizens.

As noted in Table 1, eighteen libraries indicated use of Bi-Folkal kits. This item was not listed as a choice on the questionnaire. It was added by the respondents in the

"other" category for services and programs. These eighteen libraries accounted for one-third of those offering programs or services to older adults. Bi-Folkal kits are produced by a nonprofit corporation, Bi-Folkal Productions, established in 1976 by two librarians. They are multisensory kits, each focusing on a different theme or time from the past, to encourage creative programming with older adults and the sharing of experiences between generations. Topics include, among others, music, the decades, automobiles, school days, seasons, work, pets, fun and games, and a recent new item, *Learning From the Past*. This latter kit is to assist librarians and others using the kits intergenerationally. The kits are available either for purchase or rental (Rubin 1993, p. 105).

It was interesting to discover that 34% of the 53 libraries offering programs to older adults make use of Bi-Folkal kits. It would seem to indicate that librarians are willing to make use of creative programming ideas. In fact, they may be more likely to plan intergenerational programs if this kind of assistance is available to them. In light of the limited funds of so many individual libraries, various agencies could collaborate in providing expertise and/or materials, such as the Bi-Folkal kits. *Generations Together*, an intergenerational project and clearinghouse in Pittsburgh notes that one characteristic of successful programs is collaboration among agencies (Rubin 1993, p.19). These agencies could include state or regional library

associations, Area Agency on Aging, senior centers, churches and synagogues, schools, Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE), and many other social service and educational agencies. Individual libraries, especially in small towns and rural areas, often find it difficult to plan and execute effective programs. In fact, several libraries noted they already work with American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) or the Carnegie Library for the Blind and Handicapped. One library reported that it has used the *Learning From the Past* Bi-Folkal kit and that interagency training had been provided. The kits themselves are available to all of the district's libraries.

Several libraries added in their comments that they plan to add intergenerational or older adult programming in the future. Two specifically stated that Bi-Folkal kits will be used in conjunction with the children's department and older citizens, perhaps grandparents. Many of the libraries sent examples of programs they present for older adults, and also for youth. Some of these programs, with a little ingenuity, could be turned into intergenerational programs, using available staff and volunteers.

The libraries were asked to give summaries of the intergenerational programs they had presented. These programs are described in Appendix A.

CHAPTER V.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As stated by researchers, not only in the library profession, but also in the fields of education, gerontology, and sociology, older adults constitute a growing, vital segment of the population. People are not only living longer, but are remaining active and intellectually vigorous as they age. Society is becoming more segmented with the elderly and the younger generations becoming more isolated from each other, resulting in negative stereotypes toward each other. Intergenerational contact is needed to counter these trends. The demographics and characteristics of the aging population have implications for the service priorities and objectives of the public library.

While this survey is not an attempt to replicate the previous landmark studies of library service to older adults, nor can the results be construed to be representative of all public libraries, it is an attempt to gauge the prevalence of and attitudes concerning intergenerational programming. Western Pennsylvania is an area rich in public library history and tradition (Pittsburgh was the home of Andrew Carnegie). To that end,

it is merely a "snapshot" of the programs, services, and needs for those programs. However, some of the conclusions Casey makes in comparing those previous studies appear to be borne out by the results of this questionnaire. In Library Services for the Aging, Casey reports that both the 1971 National Survey and the 1981 Services for the Elderly in Illinois Public Libraries indicated that lack of funds and lack of staff interest and competence were major constraints against service to the aging. Also, both studies showed that larger and medium sized libraries serving urban and suburban communities were more likely to develop service to older adults. In addition, most public libraries maintain some contact with other agencies serving older adults (p. 53).

As results of this questionnaire have shown, lack of funding and staffing are definitely obstacles to providing intergenerational programming in western Pennsylvania. As noted above, only six of the responding libraries have actually presented such programs, in spite of the fact that 82 (68%) feel there is a need.

As only six libraries actually presented intergenerational programs, it is not possible to show a valid statistical relationship between the type of area and the presentation of the programs. However, a simple tally shows that of the six, only one reported itself to be in a rural location. This is a topic for possible further study.

In terms of contact with other agencies in the presentation of intergenerational programs, none of the six reported that their programs are offered in conjunction with other agencies. They were planned and executed by the individual libraries. However, a review of the summaries indicates that in two instances, there is cooperation with outside entities, i.e. nursing home visits, and district library interagency training in the use of a Bi-Folkal kit. Thus, while these results seem to follow the pattern of the landmark studies, more investigation is needed to determine if there has been progress in the ensuing years providing service to older adults, including intergenerational programming.

While it is encouraging that 68% of the libraries feel a need for intergenerational programming, more work needs to be done to increase the perception of the value of such programming. More importantly, more information on program ideas, funding support, interagency cooperation and especially support from state and regional library associations is needed to increase the incidence of intergenerational programming. Thus, resources can be maximized and intergenerational programming given a higher priority, approaching the levels of children's programs and the provision of large print items.

Not only are different age groups separated in society, they are also segregated in public libraries. Youth services and adult services frequently are separate entities

with separate staff and programs. As many libraries are having to cope with limited staffing and funding, intergenerational programming can be a way to make greater use of those limited resources. Many programs can be done with little or no additional outlay of money, or additional staff. Many can be run by volunteers. The literature recounts all types of programs, from simple one-time only events to ongoing series. With a little ingenuity, many existing programs can be enlarged into intergenerational events. For example, libraries that provide books and materials to local senior citizen centers, can organize youth or young adult visits for the purpose of reading together, sharing stories, games, or crafts. Existing staff of both institutions may coordinate such efforts.

Much potential exists for the development of programs for older adults and youth. Research in the fields of social gerontology and education identifies the benefits of such interaction for both, i.e. increased appreciation of each other, reduction or elimination of negative stereotypes, enrichment of each others' experience, and contribution to the developmental tasks of each. Libraries are a natural arena for this intergenerational contact that can be so meaningful to both the older adults and the youth, bringing together segments of the population that have become isolated from each other in our society.

APPENDIX A

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The following are summaries of the intergenerational programs responding libraries reported having presented. (See Part II of the questionnaire)

1. Rain Forest Study Group. 1993-present.
Description: A study group which meets one or two times a month, with occasional programs on related subjects which attract persons in addition to the regular group. Films, demonstrations, field trips, lectures are included in programs.
Target Age Groups: 7 years to 60 years
Ongoing program, not presented in conjunction with other agencies, youth and adult staff jointly responsible for the program, volunteers are used.
Participant response: "committed, curious about subjects."
Would present another intergenerational program? "Yes, general atmosphere is positive when generations are mixed."

2. Learning From the Past. 1992-93.
Description: Bi-Folkal kits purchased and interagency training in intergenerational programming using reminiscence.
Target Age Groups: Schoolage through senior citizen.
Program not ongoing. "The program was a self-defined limited program." Not presented in conjunction with other agencies, district consultant responsible for program, volunteers not used.
Participant response: "Enthusiastic."
Would present another intergenerational program? "Yes, if I had the time."

3. Intergenerational Reading Day. 1993
Description: Six to eight adult readers volunteered blocks of time to read to youngsters in the children's room of the library. In turn, the children read to them. Two such programs have been held and a third is planned.
Target Age Groups: Preschoolers, elementary grades, adults of any age.
Program ongoing, not offered in conjunction with other agencies, youth services staff responsible, volunteers used.
Participant response: "Enthusiastic, pleasure, proud."
Would present another intergenerational program? "Yes..comments..showed they enjoyed the chance to interact with youngsters."

4.Individual Reading Enrichment. 1980
Description: Adult readers read with children in grades 2 & 3. Program is six weeks long, presented three times a year, following a theme.
Target Age Groups: Adult, second and third graders.
Program ongoing, not offered in conjunction with other agencies, youth services staff responsible, volunteers used.
Participant response: "Enthusiastic."

5.Nursing Home Visits. This program was briefly described as a summer program in which youth ages 11-14 visited a nursing home once a week to read with resident, with the children's librarian occasionally telling a story.

6.Chess Club. 1991
Description: Group of thirty meets monthly to play chess.
Target Age Groups: Kindergarten through senior citizens.
Program ongoing, not offered in conjunction with other agencies, youth services staff responsible, volunteers used.
Participant Response: "Enthusiastic."
Would do another intergenerational Program? "Yes."

7.Family Christmas Party. 1990.
Description: Open house with films, entertainment, food, stories.
Target Age Groups: All age groups, parents, children and grandparents attend.
Program ongoing, not offered in conjunction with other agencies, youth and adult services staff responsible, volunteers used.
Participant response: "Love it!"
Would do another intergenerational program? "yes, if time, budget and staff restrictions allow."

8.Unnamed. This library reported that while they do not present a formal intergenerational program, approximately 45 volunteers, many over age 65, help school children with homework. This library has also provided space for woman-child literacy programs offered by a county literacy council.

APPENDIX B
COVER LETTER

School of Library and Information Science
(216) 672-2782
Fax 216-672-7965

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY
P. O. Box 5190, Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

Re: Intergenerational Programming in Ohio Public Libraries

July 14, 1994

Dear Librarian:

I am a graduate student in the School of Library and Information Science at Kent State University. As part of the requirements for my master's degree I am conducting a study about intergenerational programming in public libraries in Ohio. The enclosed survey elicits information that will help me determine the extent of intergenerational programming and the perceived need for it. This information would be useful to both theorists and public librarians.

Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed as you do not need to sign your name to individual questionnaires; only the investigator has access to the survey data. There is no penalty of any kind if you should choose not to participate in this study or if you would withdraw from participation at any time. While your cooperation is essential to the success of this study, it is, of course, voluntary. A copy of the results of the study will be available upon request.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (216) 729-1222 or Dr. Buttlar, my research advisor, at (216) 672-2782. If you have any further questions regarding research at Kent State University you may contact Dr. Eugene Wenninger, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, at (216) 672-2851.

Thank you very much for your cooperation; it is much appreciated. You may return the survey in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope to me at the following address:

Jeanne A. Sapir
7708 Maple Grove Drive
Chesterland, Ohio 44026

Sincerely,

Jeanne A. Sapir
Graduate Student

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX C
INTERGENERATIONAL LIBRARY PROGRAMMING SURVEY
PART I

1. Does your library offer programs, either regularly or occasionally for older adults (those over age 65 and/or retired)?
   Yes____ No_____

2. If the answer to question 1 is yes, please check all that apply:

   _____Booktalks
   _____Crafts programs
   _____Storytelling
   _____Music Programs
   _____Poetry and creative writing programs
   _____Drama
   _____Current events programs (speakers, etc.)
   _____Oral history programs
   _____"How to use the library" programs
   _____Travelogues
   _____Intergenerational programs (those involving older adults and children)
   _____Other_____
   _____

3. Does your library offer special services for older adults?
   _____Large print items
   _____Talking books
   _____Home delivery service
   _____Library sponsored visits to nursing homes, senior citizen centers, etc.
   _____Bookmobile service
   _____Telecommunication devices for hearing impaired
   _____Other_____
   _____

4. Do you feel there is a need for intergenerational programming in your library's service area (those involving senior citizens and youth)?
   Yes_____ No_____

5. If you have not done any intergenerational programming do you plan to do so in the future?
   Yes_____ No_____

6. Do you feel there is a need for programming targeted specifically to senior citizens in your service area?
   Yes_____ No_____

7. In what type of area is your library located?
   Urban_____ Suburban_____ Rural_____

INTERGENERATIONAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS SURVEY
PART II

(If your library has presented more than one program, please copy this form and return one form for each program.)

1. Name of program:_____

2. Date of program or year program began_____

3. Brief description of program:

4. Target age groups:_____

5. Is the program still ongoing?_____ If not, when and why was it discontinued?

6. Is the program offered in conjunction with any other agency or organization?_____ If so, please identify:

7. Who in your library is responsible for the program?
   Youth services staff_____ Adult services staff_____
   Combination of youth and adult services staff_____
   Other_____

8. Were volunteers involved in the program? Yes_____ No____

9. What adjectives best describe participant response to the program?

10. Would you do another intergenerational program? Please explain.

11. Additional comments:

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